

Regular Session, 2009

SENATE BILL NO. 316

BY SENATOR NEVERS

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

CURRICULA. Provides for comprehensive approach to improve graduation rates and ensure college and career readiness for high school students. (gov sig)

AN ACT

To enact Chapter 18 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:2921 through 2932, to enact R.S. 23:6(15), and to repeal Subpart A-1 of Part III of Chapter 2 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:183.1 through 183.9, relative to college and career readiness; to provide for programs to improve high school graduation rates and prepare students for postsecondary education and careers; to provide for the development of focused programs of study and related courses and curricula; to provide for student development of individual graduation plans; to provide relative to student guidance and counseling; to provide relative to programs for identification of and assistance to students at risk for being underprepared for the next level of study; to establish a high school graduation rate goal; to provide for consideration of improved graduation rates and completion of certain advanced coursework by the state educational accountability system; to provide relative to articulation and transfer of credit; to provide for consultation and collaboration with business and industry and the Louisiana Workforce Commission; to provide relative to the recruitment and training of certain instructional personnel; to provide for reporting and rules; to

1 provide for implementation guidelines and timelines; to provide relative to funding;  
2 and to provide for related matters.

3 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

4 Section 1. Chapter 18 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,  
5 comprised of R.S. 17:2921 through 2932, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

6 **CHAPTER 18. LOUISIANA STUDENT COLLEGE AND CAREER**

7 **READINESS ACT**

8 **§2921. Short title**

9 **This Chapter may be cited as the Louisiana Student College and Career**  
10 **Readiness Act.**

11 **§2922. Purpose and goal**

12 **The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation and**  
13 **collaboration with the postsecondary education management boards through**  
14 **the Board of Regents, shall establish state strategic initiatives to improve high**  
15 **school graduation rates and ensure student readiness for postsecondary**  
16 **education and career opportunities. Such strategies shall seamlessly connect**  
17 **pre-kindergarten through twelfth education with postsecondary education and**  
18 **the workplace.**

19 **§2923. Curriculum development and alignment**

20 **A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall develop**  
21 **middle and high school curricula that are aligned with state content standards,**  
22 **embed twenty-first century work skills, and provide students with the**  
23 **opportunity to enroll in rigorous career-focused programs of study in high-**  
24 **demand, high-wage, high-skill career fields that are aligned with workforce**  
25 **demands, future employment opportunities, and regional and state economic**  
26 **development priorities.**

27 **B. The board shall align the curriculum for the middle grades with high**  
28 **school readiness standards and redesign the eighth and ninth grade curriculum**  
29 **to ensure that students who are unprepared for a rigorous high school**

1 curriculum can successfully complete high school graduation requirements.  
2 Such curriculum revisions shall specifically provide for strategies and targeted  
3 support to reduce the number of students leaving eighth grade underprepared  
4 for high school coursework which may include flexible scheduling, catch-up  
5 classes in mathematics and reading/language arts, student mentoring, and  
6 career exploration classes.

7 §2924. Applied and hybrid courses; local course development

8 A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in collaboration  
9 with the Board of Regents, shall develop applied and hybrid courses that  
10 combine rigorous academic content with relevant career education that creates  
11 links between what a student does in school to what they want to do in life. Such  
12 courses may result in a credit in both the academic and the career technical  
13 course and successfully transfer to technical and community colleges and four-  
14 year postsecondary educational institutions where applicable.

15 B. City, parish, and other local public school boards may develop and  
16 implement applied and hybrid courses to meet local needs, subject to board  
17 approval. The board shall provide templates, technical assistance, and  
18 professional development to assist local school districts with course development  
19 and implementation.

20 §2925. Individual Graduation Plans

21 A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall develop a  
22 state model for five-year individual graduation plans which shall include a  
23 curriculum framework that will allow each student to pursue a chosen career  
24 major. Curriculum frameworks shall be based upon the national career  
25 clusters developed by the United States Department of Education.

26 B. (1) By the end of the eighth grade, every student, with the assistance  
27 of his parent or other legal guardian and school guidance personnel, shall  
28 develop an individual graduation plan to assist them in exploring educational  
29 and career possibilities and in making appropriate secondary and

1 postsecondary decisions as part of an overall career plan. Such plan shall be  
2 based on the student's talents and interests and shall consider high school  
3 graduation requirements and postsecondary entrance requirements.

4 (2) Each student, with the assistance of his parent or other legal guardian  
5 and school guidance personnel, shall be allowed to choose the high school  
6 curriculum framework and related graduation requirements that best meets his  
7 postsecondary goals. Each student's individual graduation plan shall include  
8 the recommended sequence of courses for successful completion of his chosen  
9 career major that aligns with postsecondary education, training, and the  
10 workforce and shall be reviewed annually and updated or revised as needed.

11 (3) Individual graduation plans shall be sufficiently flexible to allow  
12 students to change their program of study, yet be sufficiently structured to  
13 ensure that a student will meet all high school graduation requirements and be  
14 qualified for admission to a postsecondary education institution or to enter the  
15 workforce.

16 (4) Each student's individual graduation plan shall be signed by the  
17 student and his parent or other legal guardian.

18 C. To provide a foundation for the development of individual  
19 graduation plans, schools shall provide career awareness and exploration  
20 activities to all students in grades six through eight that create linkages between  
21 what a student does in school and what he wants to achieve in life. Such  
22 activities shall include career interest inventories and information to assist them  
23 in the career decision-making process and may include job shadowing, job  
24 mentoring, and job internships.

25 §2926. Student guidance and counseling; training and professional  
26 development

27 A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall develop a  
28 guidance and advisement policy for the middle and high school grades that local  
29 school districts can use to equip school guidance personnel with the skills and

**information needed to:**

**(1) Help students identify their goals and assist students and their parents in developing and revising individualized graduation plans.**

**(2) Ensure that all students receive the assistance they need to stay in school, achieve at the expected levels, and fulfill all requirements for high school graduation.**

**B. The Department of Education shall provide professional development and in-service training opportunities to school guidance personnel regarding development of individual graduation plans. Such activities shall provide information relative to high-demand, high-skill, high-wage job opportunities that require a certification, or postsecondary associate or baccalaureate degree and how a combination of rigorous academic and career-technical education courses can prepare students for these fields.**

**§2927. Early identification of underprepared students; support and assistance**

**A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish and implement a system in which failure is not an option and all students are supported to meet or exceed grade-level standards. Such system shall provide students in all classes with engaging, challenging assignments based upon real-world tasks through which students are required to creatively solve problems, interpret and evaluate information, and communicate effectively.**

**B. The board shall develop objective criteria for schools to use in the identification of students, as early as the sixth grade, who are at-risk of being underprepared for the next level of study and develop strategies to address their specific needs and provide them with the opportunity to graduate from high school and develop the skills necessary to successfully enter the workforce.**

**C. The Department of Education shall provide professional development and support to principals and teachers to assist them in implementing new planning and instructional strategies that will engage more students intellectually, emotionally, socially, and behaviorally in the learning process and**

1 that create learning environments in which students can see the value of the  
2 information and skills they are required to learn and are thus motivated to  
3 achieve.

4 D. The board shall allow schools and school districts sufficient flexibility  
5 in scheduling options and the length of the school day and year in order to  
6 provide middle and high school students with the range of programs and  
7 supports they may deem necessary to ensure that more students graduate from  
8 high school and are prepared for postsecondary education and careers.

9 E.(1) The board shall require all city, parish, and other local school  
10 boards to implement existing programs that provide academic support, dual  
11 enrollment opportunities, industry-based skills training, soft skills training,  
12 work-based learning opportunities, and adult mentoring to students, as funding  
13 is available.

14 (2) City, parish, and other local public school boards shall identify any  
15 available funds that could be utilized to support immediate implementation of  
16 such programs, including funding provided through the minimum foundation  
17 program and other sources of local, state, federal, or private funding.

18 §2928. Graduation goals; responsibility; recognition for graduation rates and  
19 student academic achievement

20 A. (1) The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish  
21 improved high school graduation rates as a top educational priority, and the  
22 board and the state superintendent of education are hereby charged with the  
23 responsibility to achieve a high school graduation rate of eighty percent by the  
24 end of the 2013-2014 school year, with no weakening of existing high school  
25 graduation requirements.

26 (2) Progress toward achieving this goal shall be made part of the board's  
27 annual performance evaluation process for the state superintendent of  
28 education.

29 (3) The board shall submit a written report regarding school, district,

1 and statewide graduation rates for the prior school year, including trend data,  
2 to the Senate and House Committees on Education and to the governor not later  
3 than October first of each year.

4 (4) If the Senate and House Committees on Education determine that  
5 satisfactory progress toward meeting the established graduation rate goal is not  
6 being made, the committees shall jointly make recommendations to the  
7 legislature regarding additional actions they deem necessary to facilitate  
8 achievement of the stated goal.

9 B. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall revise the  
10 school and student accountability system to recognize schools that improve their  
11 high school graduation rates and for the number of students who successfully  
12 complete programs that lead to industry-based certifications and International  
13 Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment courses.

14 §2929. Articulation and transfer of credit

15 Every city, parish, and other local public school board shall develop  
16 interinstitutional articulation and transfer agreements with technical colleges,  
17 community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities, in accordance with  
18 policies, rules, and regulations adopted by the Board of Regents and the Board  
19 of Elementary and Secondary Education, that will facilitate communication,  
20 interaction, articulation, acceleration, transfer of credit, and the efficient use of  
21 faculty, equipment, and facilities.

22 §2930. Collaboration with business and industry; coordination with workforce  
23 needs

24 A. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department  
25 of Education, the Board of Regents, and the postsecondary education  
26 management boards shall work with the designated representative from the  
27 Louisiana Workforce Commission to facilitate the identification of regional and  
28 state workforce needs and work-based educational and training opportunities  
29 and to ensure coordination in the delivery of career and technical education

1 across all educational agencies and institutions.

2 B. Every city, parish, and other local public school board shall convene  
3 biannual public meetings with representatives of career and technical education  
4 advisory committees, local workforce investment boards, and colleges and  
5 universities in their region to discuss regional workforce needs and the  
6 educational, training, and work-based learning opportunities that should be  
7 provided to students to meet both individual and workforce needs.

8 C. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall expand  
9 existing programs that recruit and train individuals with experience and skills  
10 in business and industry, but with no prior teaching experience, to teach courses  
11 in the public schools in their specific area of expertise; provided that utilizing  
12 such instructional personnel does not prevent the full articulation and transfer  
13 of credit for students who complete such courses.

14 §2931. Rules and regulations

15 The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in  
16 consultation with the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Workforce  
17 Commission, shall adopt rules and regulations to implement the provisions of  
18 this Chapter in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

19 §2932. Implementation; funding

20 A. The provisions of this Chapter shall be implemented as expeditiously  
21 as possible; however, full implementation shall be accomplished not later than  
22 the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year.

23 B. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall ensure that  
24 sufficient funding is made available to implement the provisions of this Chapter  
25 and may utilize state appropriations, federal funds, funds made available  
26 through other sources, or funds realized through realignment of other programs  
27 administered by the board and the Department of Education.

28 Section 2. R.S. 23:6(15) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

29 §6. Powers and duties



In addition to any other powers and duties which may be conferred upon the executive director by law, he shall:

\* \* \*

**(15) Designate an existing senior-level staff member of the Louisiana Workforce Commission to serve as liaison to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Education, the Board of Regents, and the postsecondary education management boards to facilitate the identification of regional and statewide workforce needs and work-based educational and training opportunities and ensure coordination in the delivery of career and technical education across all educational agencies and institutions.**

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Section 3. Subpart A-1 of Part III of Chapter 2 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:183.1 through 183.9, is hereby repealed.

Section 4. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

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DIGEST

Proposed law provides for the Louisiana Student College and Career Readiness Act as follows:

Requires the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in collaboration with the postsecondary education management boards through the Board of Regents (BoR) to establish strategic initiatives to improve high school graduation rates and ensure student readiness for postsecondary education and career opportunities.

Requires BESE to develop middle and high school curricula that are aligned with state content standards, embed 21<sup>st</sup> century work skills, and provide students with the opportunity to enroll in rigorous career-focused programs of study in high-demand, high-wage, high-skill career fields aligned with workforce demands, employment opportunities, and regional and state economic development priorities.

Requires BESE to align the middle school curriculum high school readiness standards and redesign the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum to ensure that students unprepared for high school

study can successfully complete high school graduation requirements. Further requires strategies and targeted support to reduce the number of students leaving 8<sup>th</sup> grade unprepared for high school.

Requires BESE, in collaboration with the BoR to develop applied and hybrid courses that combine rigorous academic content with relevant career education that creates links between what a student does in school to what he wants to do in life. Provides that such courses may result in a credit in both an academic and a career technical course and transfer to a postsecondary educational institution. Allows local school boards to develop applied and hybrid courses, subject to BESE approval.

Provides for individual graduation plans for students as follows:

- (1) Requires BESE to develop a state model for 5-year individual graduation plans which shall include a curriculum framework, based upon national career clusters developed by the U.S. Dept. of Education, that will allow a student to pursue a chosen career major.
- (2) Requires that by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, every student, with the assistance of his parent or other legal guardian and school guidance personnel, to develop an individual graduation plan to assist them in exploring educational and career possibilities and to make appropriate decisions as part of an overall career plan.
- (3) Students, with parental and school guidance personnel assistance, may choose the high school curriculum framework and related graduation requirements that best meets their postsecondary goals. Provides that each student's plan shall include the recommended sequence of courses needed for successful completion of his chosen career major and shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed.
- (4) Requires that individual graduation plans must be flexible enough to allow a student to change his program of study yet be sufficiently structured to ensure high school graduation requirements will be met and a student meets postsecondary entrance qualifications.
- (5) Requires that individual graduation plans must be signed by the student and his parent or other legal guardian.
- (6) Requires schools to provide career awareness and exploration activities in grades 6-8 to lay the foundation for the development of individual graduation plans. Provides that such activities shall provide linkages between what a student does in school and what he wants to achieve in life. Further requires that such activities must include career interest inventories.

Requires BESE to develop a guidance and advisement policy that local school districts can use to equip school guidance personnel with the information and skills needed to help students identify their goals and assist students and parents to develop individual graduation plans. Further requires the Dept. of Education (DOE) to provide professional development and training to school guidance personnel regarding development of individual graduation plans, workforce and training needs and opportunities.

Requires BESE to provide for a system whereby student failure is not an option and all students are supported to meet or exceed grade-level standards. Requires BESE to develop criteria to identify students, as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade, who are at-risk of being underprepared for the next level of study and provide strategies for meeting their specific needs and the opportunity to graduate from high school and develop skills necessary to enter the workforce.

Requires DOE to provide professional development and support to principals and teachers

to allow them to learn and implement new planning and instructional strategies that engage more students intellectually, emotionally, socially, and behaviorally in the learning process and that create learning environments in which students can see the value of the information and skills they are required to learn and are thus motivated to achieve.

Requires BESE to allow schools and school districts flexibility in scheduling and length of the school day and year to provide students with the range of programs deemed necessary to ensure that more graduate from high school and are prepared for postsecondary education and careers.

Requires BESE to require local school boards to implement programs that provide academic support, dual enrollment, industry-based skills training, soft skills training, work-based learning opportunities, and adult mentoring to students, as funding is available. Requires local school boards to identify any available funds that could be utilized to support immediate implementation of such programs, including funding provided through the minimum foundation program and other sources of local, state, federal, or private funding.

Requires BESE to establish improved high school graduation rates as a top educational priority and charges BESE and the state superintendent of education with responsibility to achieve a high school graduation rate of eighty percent by the end of the 2013-2014 school year, with no weakening of existing high school graduation requirements.

Requires that progress toward achieving the high school graduation goal be made part of the state superintendent of education's annual performance evaluation.

Requires BESE to submit a report to the Senate and House committees on education and the governor by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year regarding school, district, and statewide graduation rates for the prior school year, including trend data.

Provides that if Senate and House committees on education determine that satisfactory progress toward meeting the established graduation rate goal is not being made, they shall jointly make recommendations to the legislature regarding additional actions they deem necessary to facilitate achievement of the stated goal.

Requires BESE to revise the state educational accountability system to recognize schools that improve their graduation rates and for the number of students who successfully complete advanced coursework.

Requires local school boards to develop articulation and transfer agreements with postsecondary educational institutions in accordance with BoR and BESE policy.

Requires BESE, DOE, BoR, and the postsecondary education management boards to work with a designated representative from the La. Workforce Commission to identify regional and state workforce needs and ensure coordination in the delivery of career and technical education across all educational agencies and institutions. Requires the executive director of the commission to appoint an existing member of his staff to serve as liaison to educational agencies and institutions.

Requires local school boards to convene biannual public meetings with career and technical advisory committees, local workforce investment boards, and colleges and universities in their region to discuss regional workforce needs and how to meet them.

Requires BESE to expand existing programs that recruit and train individuals with business and industry experience and skills, but no prior teaching experience, to teach in the public schools, provided use of such personnel does not prevent the articulation and transfer of credit for students taking such courses.

Requires BESE, in coordination with the BoR and the La. Workforce Commission, to adopt

the rules necessary to implement proposed law in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

Provides that the provisions of proposed law shall be implemented as expeditiously as possible and requires full implementation by the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year.

Requires BESE to ensure that sufficient funding is made available to implement proposed law and provides that BESE may utilize state appropriations, federal funds, funds made available through other sources, or funds realized through realignment of other programs administered by the board and the DOE.

Present law (R.S. 17:183.1-183.9) provides for the High School Career Option program, components, requirements, and implementation guidelines and timelines. Proposed law repeals present law. Many of the provisions of present law are no longer applicable, and the core purpose and functions of the High School Career Option program are incorporated into proposed law.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S.17:2921-2932 and R.S. 23:6(15); repeals R.S.17:183.1-183.9)